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ABSTRACT

Thirty-seven ways to communicate effectively with board members and superintendents regarding staff development are listed. Formal and informal methods for keeping them both informed and involved are suggested. (JH)

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TIPS ON COMMUNICATING WITH THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND SUPERINTENDENT: CREATING SUPPORT FOR THE STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

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TIPS on Communicating with the Board of Education and Superintendent: Creating Support for the Staff Development Program.

* Involve the Superintendent in developing a staff development proposal.

* Personally invite Board of Education members to participate in staff development activities and special events.

--Tom Swenson/Cathy Caro-Bruce, Madison, WI

* Make sure the Superintendent and Board are represented on planning committees.

--Gwen Van Dorp, Amherst, MA

* Ask Board members to write articles for staff development publications.

--Gwen Van Dorp, Amherst, MA

* Send update reports to each Board member; evaluate the staff development program's accomplishments.

--Dennis Sparks, Livonia, MI

* Ask teachers to write personal letters to the Superintendent detailing what they've learned from inservice workshops.

--Allen Banbury, Philadelphia, PA
--Donna Bickel, Poughkeepsie, NY

* Make regular presentations about staff development programs to the Board, not just when you're asking for money. Present a demonstration and allow time for questions.

--Ted Forte, Norfolk, VA

* Send bibliographies of information about successful practices and provide copies of articles and program descriptions as requested.

--Carol Martinez, Denver, CO

* Schedule conferences with the Superintendent that focus on the staff development program.

* Use the NSDC position paper and ASCD's publication "School Board Members' Guide to Staff Development" with Board members.

--Steve Wlodarczyk, Elgin, IL

* Conduct a workshop for the Board/Superintendent on a topic of interest to them; include a diagnosis of needs, goal setting, training, follow up, and evaluation.

--Steve Wlodarczyk, Elgin, IL
--Larry Schaefer, New Haven, CT

* Provide yearly reports on the staff development program.

--Chuck Fuller, Atlanta, GA

* Hold informal discussions with one or two Board members at a time.

--Michael Rodriguez, Concord, CA

* Invite the Superintendent/Board members to do workshops for other education personnel.

--Bob Kiner, Sioux Falls, SD

* Send Board members copies of staff development needs assessments.

--Bob Kiner, Sioux Falls, SD

* Use the budget making process to inform decision makers about successes and needs.

--Jim Metzdorf, Lakewood, CO

* Develop a list of "functions" for staff development which form the outline for reporting last year's accomplishments and next year's operational plan.

--Jim Metzdorf, Lakewood, CO

* Get the Superintendent to spend time at each workshop (the more the better). In the past it was "an appearance now and then." Now, when he spends more time and gets involved, he sees the value of the activity to participants.

--Ted Czajkowski, Bellingham, WA

* Organize a school Board work session on the importance, priority, and agenda for staff development.

--Steve Wolf, Soldotna, AK

* Respond to the "stated goals" of the school district.

--Roger Johnson, Minneapolis, MN

* Informally communicate--play golf or racquetball with members of the Board or the Superintendent.

--Archie Wilson, Schaumberg, IL

* Provide the Superintendent/Board with impact data.

--Larry Schaefer, New Haven, CT

* Occasionally send the Superintendent/Board members a note with copies of participants' evaluations of a staff development activity of special interest to the Superintendent or Board.

--Dee Shaw, Lansing, MI

* Become a regular agenda item of Board meetings.

--Claude Crase, Elk Grove, IL

* Walk into the superintendent's office when he's free and tell him a brief "success story" to illustrate a goal for professional growth he has expressed.

--Mimi McKenna, West Hartford, CT

* Every day for a week or two send a note or memo to the superintendent about a project you want him/her to know about or be aware of. Think of these memos as "one-a-day" vitamins. Be sure to write an introductory letter about the "vitamin pill" and then include written comments from teachers about classes they have taken.

--Jean Cusack, Hampton, VA

* Include a column on inservice in the in-house monthly newsletter for employees.

--Jim Hildebrand, Southfield, MI

* Invite the Superintendent to building level meetings when staff development needs are being discussed.

--Hank Gmitro, DeKalb, IL

* Seek input when plans are still in the formative stage so that they (the Board and Superintendent) can help shape them.

--Sheila Wilson, Mt. Prospect, IL

* Ask for time at Cabinet meetings to share the results of effective inservice programs.

--Margie Jobe, Champaign, IL

* Prepare and present an executive summary report of evaluation data collected annually.

--Gerry Geik, Kalamazoo, MI

* Meet with members of the community and let them influence the Board.

--John Thurber, West Palm Beach, FL
--Burt Wood, Milwaukee, WI
--Connie Peterson, Livonia, MI

* Invite the Superintendent to speak at as many staff development functions as he will. In the process of preparing his remakrs, he often asks for ideas about what he should say which gives me the opportunity to provide him with information about the staff development program and with the newest research findings.

--Marjorie Bradley, Hartford, CT

* When someone has made a significant contribution to your staff development program (particularly teachers or principals), ask the superintendent to write a note of commendation. People feel reinforced for their efforts; the superintendent is seen as more approachable; the superintendent is also more informed.

--Betty Dillon Peterson, Lincoln NE

* Start a "take-a-superintendent-to-lunch" project to discuss the accomplishments of the staff development program and to ask advice--what more can the program do for the district.

--Jane Applegate, Columbus, OH

* Hold a breakfast meeting with the Board.

--Jim Garrison, Chesterfield, MO

* Collect, reproduce and hand-bind a "sampler" of student work from all areas of the curriculum (K-12) done in the classrooms of teachers who have participated in the staff development program. Each piece of work is labeled (1) what the "lesson" was in which the student produced the work and (2) what the teacher had done in the staff development activity. The sampler demonstrates the effect of the staff development program on student performance.

--Amity Buxton, Oakland, CA